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SOVIET UNION - EASTERN EUROPE

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Soviets Offer Aid to Sihanouk

The Soviets are trying to ingratiate themselves with Sihanouk and his government by offering them military, economic, and political support.

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The meeting itself is tangible evidence that the Soviets believe Sihanouk will play a role in Phnom Penh and that they are willing to deal with him despite his close ties to the Chinese. It was not until March 28 that the Soviets pressed the representatives of the Lon Nol government to leave Moscow and recognized Sihanouk's government. Moscow evidently now hopes that a generous aid offer to Sihanouk and the Khmer Communists will make up for lost time and give the Cambodians another option to reliance on Peking or Hanoi.

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Budapest Issues New Rules on Contact with Foreigners

The Hungarian government has issued new and tougher regulations governing official contacts with foreigners in Hungary and elsewhere, [redacted] 25X1
25X1 [redacted] Hungarian officials claim that the rules were written in anticipation of Soviet concessions on the freedom-of-movement issue at the European security conference. In addition to meeting Soviet demands to tighten up in the face of detente, they may also be designed to attack the problem of corruption.

25X1 The [redacted] decree requires individuals to report all private contacts and personal correspondence with foreigners, and prohibits any contact with individuals who left Hungary illegally. The rules also require that meetings be held in official reception rooms rather than in private offices and compel individuals to get approval before inviting a foreigner to a private home or a public place. Furthermore, officials must receive approval before accepting gifts worth more than 1,000 forints (about $50) and must reject ones worth more than 5,000 forints (about $250).

Thus far, the regulations apply only to organizations involved in foreign trade, but [redacted] 25X1
25X1 [redacted] they eventually will cover all ministries and institutions that have continuing contact with foreigners. Other East European countries have also had trouble with corruption, and they may follow the Hungarian lead in tightening official business dealings.

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New Soviet Grain Combines Get Poor Marks

The Niva and Kolos grain combines, first used on a large scale during the 1973 and 1974 harvests, have been given poor marks by their operators. The combines, which were designed to be 40 to 50 percent more productive than the SK-4 model they are replacing, have proved to be extremely unreliable. In 1974, nearly half of the Kolos combines in Krasnodar Kray, a major grain area, were not operating at the peak of the harvesting season. The quality of parts and workmanship apparently is significantly lower than for the old SK-4. Solemn promises to improve quality made by officials of the manufacturing plants go unfulfilled, while supporting component suppliers are confounded by numerous design changes.

A Soviet engineer claims that the crux of the problem is that the combines are manufactured from "raw" designs that are being modified "on the run." Design engineers had at least five years after the first prototypes were completed to make modifications, but the greater power, complexity and sophistication of the new models apparently presented technical problems they were unable to solve prior to the commitment to begin production. Not surprisingly, given the Soviet penchant for quantity over quality, the manufacturing plants have been reminded that delivery plans for the new combines are to be met unconditionally.

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Soviet Articles on War Anniversary Differ on Detente Issues

The early articles that have appeared in this year's lengthy Soviet campaign to celebrate the 30th anniversary of victory in World War II reflect differing viewpoints regarding current policy issues. Some of the articles take a pro-detente stance, citing the history of allied cooperation during the war as a model for the present. Others are clearly intended to stress the importance of maintaining a strong defense posture, and they cite the alleged primacy of the Soviet Union's contribution to the victory as an object lesson in this regard. Others take a still more conservative line, stressing the role of the party as the organizer of victory, or even the role of Stalin in this regard. It is still too soon to say whether these differences reflect a reemergence of internal Soviet debate over the detente-defense issue or merely the normal range of nuances to be expected in this kind of campaign.

The February CPSU Central Committee decree announcing the start of the national celebration of the 30th anniversary signaled no particular orientation regarding current policy issues. It omitted any mention of Stalin, which seemed to suggest a pro-detente orientation, but on the other hand it gave no more than a perfunctory bow to the role of the allies in the war. The Moscow domestic radio carried a summary of the decree on February 9, and *Kommunist* carried the text in issue No. 3, signed to the press on February 11. The decree's publication in *Pravda* was unaccountably delayed, however, until February 28. The pro-detente line of commentary on the anniversary was typified by a March 12 editorial in *Izvestiya*.

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It was couched in high-flown rhetoric about the anti-Hitler coalition and expressed hope that the memorialization of the victory would provide a new stimulus to detente. More recently, Moscow has sought to link the anniversary with its current policy of calling for a world disarmament conference. A Tass commentary on April 5 reporting the conclusion of the UN committee session on preparing for the conference noted that the initiative was appropriately timed to coincide with the 30th anniversary.

Articles published in the military press or written by military authors have generally taken a much harsher line on the lessons to be drawn from the anniversary observances. This can be attributed in part to the circumstance that the start of the campaign coincided with the annual celebration of Armed Forces Day (February 23)--an occasion traditionally marked by bold declarations from military spokesmen. Yet even allowing for this, such articles as Major General S. Baranov's essay on economic preparedness in *Red Star* on February 27 stand out as unusually assertive of military interests. Focused largely on Soviet economic policy in the prewar and war years, the article uses some of the most unqualified formulas from Lenin's writings to stress the importance of preparing the country for war. It puts a fine topical point on the message, moreover, by pointing out that the party must take into consideration not only the present detente situation but other "possible" situations, and by declaring that "we will continue to be prepared for any change in the development of events."

A third track taken by some commentators on the anniversary has been to stress the role of the traditional party organs in the achievement of victory. This is the line taken by chief of

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the Lenin Military Political Academy, General Ye. Ye. Maltsev, in a April 4 article in *Pravda*. Asserting that "all fundamental questions of conducting the war were decided by the Central Committee--the Politburo, Orgburo, and Secretariat," he went on to say that the policy of the CPSU and its Leninist leadership has been, is, and will remain the decisive condition guaranteeing the invincible defense capacity of the Soviet state, the military might of the armed forces."

The Maltsev article also illustrates a fascinating sub-theme which may become more prominent as the anniversary approaches. This has to do with the treatment of Stalin--a subject which still is unsettled in the Soviet Union despite repeated regime efforts to strike a balanced assessment. Maltsev, by his unusual recitation of the names of the top party bodies, managed to avoid recalling the extraordinary party-state-military bodies with which Stalin was more intimately associated, and indeed failed to mention Stalin's name at all. Other recent articles, however, have mentioned Stalin's role, although these articles appear to be in the minority thus far. Lt. General S. Bobylev, writing in the April 1 *Rural Life*, referred to "Secretary General I. V. Stalin" as head of the wartime State Defense Committee, and Major General M. Kir'yan, writing in the April 4 *Red Star*, noted as well that Stalin was head of the Supreme Command as well as of the State Defense Committee.

Even before the current anniversary campaign, pressure to give Stalin more credit had become apparent from several quarters. The most blatant example was Ukrainian First Secretary Shcherbitskiy who hailed Stalin's role in an October 18, 1974 speech celebrating the 30th anniversary of the liberation of the Ukraine. Other spokesmen in the Ukraine have followed Shcherbitskiy's lead. In

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the meantime, the film of Aleksandr Chakovskiy's novel on the war, which contains extensive descriptions of Stalin's leadership, is currently running in Moscow and Leningrad theaters, and installments of the novel have appeared in the last four issues of the journal *Znamya*.

Conservatives have also lately been pressuring writers to stress the victories in the war, rather than the embarrassing initial defeats. Belorussian First Secretary Masherov, in a February 27 speech to writers reported in the March *Kommunist Belorussii*, complained of "one-sided" and "erroneous treatment" of the initial period of the war and declared it "completely intolerable" to undermine the people's pride in their "heroic victory." Similarly, at a March 14 Moscow writers union meeting reported in the March 16 *Moskovskaya Pravda*, Moscow First Secretary Grishin complained that some periods of the war have been described in dozens of books while other periods were being ignored.

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